Percentage of undertrials in prisons

447. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that undertrials constitute 85 per cent of the prison population;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some of the major problems faced by undertrials are judicial delay, problems in getting bail, non-accountability of lawyers;

(c) whether the undertrials are being put in Tihar and they generally face non-acceptance by society even being found innocent afterwards; and

(d) what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) As per available information, undertrials constitute about 73 percent of the prison population of the country.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government are generally aware of the problem of non-acceptance by the society after release of undertrials from jails.

(d) Both the Government and the Judiciary are concerned with the problem of undertrails in prisons. The Supreme Court of India has issued some directions in the case — R.D. Upadhyay *Vs.* State of Andhra Pradesh and Others, regarding speedy disposal of cases involving undertrial prisoners. The Directions of the Supreme Court have been commended to all State Governments/U.T. administrations for necesssary action.

The High Court of Delhi, *vide* its judgement dated 25.11.1999 in Crl. Writ 681/99, Essang Nyong & Other *Vs.* State of New Delhi, has directed the State Legal Services Authority to explore the possibility of holding of Lok Adalats in prisons for dealing with of the prisoners involved in petty crimes.

Government have sanctioned an amount of Rs. 502.90 crore for creation of 17334 Fast Track Courts for expeditious disposal of cases involving undertrials on priority. These courts will start functioning with effect from April, 2001.

Study for reserved seats in Chhattisgarh

†448. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.